



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/018,361 | 03/20/2002 | Graham Perret | 2001-1855A | 7862 |

513 7590 06/04/2003

WENDEROTH, LIND & PONACK, L.L.P.
2033 K STREET N. W.
SUITE 800
WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1021

| |
|----------|
| EXAMINER |
|----------|

SAFAVI, MICHAEL

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|
|----------|--------------|

3673

DATE MAILED: 06/04/2003

10

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/018,361 | PERRET ET AL. | |
| Period for Reply | Examiner | Art Unit | [Large Handwritten Signature] |
| | M. Safavi | 3673 | |
| <i>-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --</i> | | | |
| A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION. | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely. - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). - Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b). | | | |
| Status | | | |
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>19 December 2001</u> . | | | |
| 2a) <input type="checkbox"/> This action is FINAL. 2b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This action is non-final. | | | |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under <i>Ex parte Quayle</i> , 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213. | | | |
| Disposition of Claims | | | |
| 4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>13-27</u> is/are pending in the application. | | | |
| 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration. | | | |
| 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed. | | | |
| 6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>13-27</u> is/are rejected. | | | |
| 7) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to. | | | |
| 8) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement. | | | |
| Application Papers | | | |
| 9) <input type="checkbox"/> The specification is objected to by the Examiner. | | | |
| 10) <input type="checkbox"/> The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) <input type="checkbox"/> accepted or b) <input type="checkbox"/> objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). | | | |
| 11) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The proposed drawing correction filed on <u>20 March 2002</u> is: a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> approved b) <input type="checkbox"/> disapproved by the Examiner. If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action. | | | |
| 12) <input type="checkbox"/> The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. | | | |
| Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120 | | | |
| 13) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f). a) <input type="checkbox"/> All b) <input type="checkbox"/> Some * c) <input type="checkbox"/> None of: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____. 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)). * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received. | | | |
| 14) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application). a) <input type="checkbox"/> The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received. | | | |
| 15) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121. | | | |
| Attachment(s) | | | |
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ . | |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) | |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>3 & 5</u> . | | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Art Unit: 3673

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: reference numeral 5 does not appear in the drawing figures. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

The specification does not present a brief description of drawing Fig. 2A. As well, it is not clear as to what is being set forth in the brief description of drawing Fig. A1, (presumably Fig. 1A). It is not understood as to what is being referenced by "...of the two concepts"?

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 22 begins by reciting "use of tethers..." and proceeds to recite apparent structural features and desired characteristics. It is not clear as to what is being defined by the language of claim 22. Is claim 22 directed to an article of manufacture or a process? If directed to

Art Unit: 3673

a process, as by recitation of "use of..." the claim language appears to lack even a single procedural step which would serve to define any claimed process. If directed to an article of manufacture it would not be clear as to what is being defined by "use of tethers".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

- (a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.
- (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.
- (e) the invention was described in
 - (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effect under this subsection of a national application published under section 122(b) only if the international application designating the United States was published under Article 21(2)(a) of such treaty in the English language; or
 - (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that a patent shall not be deemed filed in the United States for the purposes of this subsection based on the filing of an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a).

5. Claims 13-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Copple '330.

Copple '330 discloses, Figs. 3, 4, 10A, and 12, a tether system for a tension leg platform formed of steel tubing and having a stepped reduction of diameter between successively lower sections such that the upper sections compensate for the weight in water of the lower sections with a decreasing buoyancy towards the seabed, col. 8, lines 45-55. Increased pressure resistance

Art Unit: 3673

towards the seabed is created as by increased wall thickness of successively lower sections, col. 8, lines 57-59. At least two stepped increases of the wall thickness are shown by 135.

6. Claims 13-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Nista et al. Nista et al. discloses, Fig. 1, a tether system for a tension leg platform formed of steel tubing and having a stepped reduction of diameter between successively lower sections such that the upper sections compensate for the weight in water of the lower sections with a decreasing buoyancy towards the seabed, col. 3, lines 27-29. Increased pressure resistance towards the seabed is created as by increased wall thickness of successively lower sections, col. 3, line 64 to col. 4, line 9. At least two stepped increases of the wall thickness are shown by 3' and between 5/ 5'.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to M. Safavi whose telephone number is (703) 308-2168.



MICHAEL SAFAVI
PTO/MSAC

M. Safavi
June 2, 2003